



Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy

Thesis Letter of Intent

(including Statement of Student's Independent Intellectual Contribution (part II), Statement of Preparedness for Thesis Research (part III), and Issues Relating to Publication of Dissertations (part IV).)

Directions for Student

- Complete form.
- Obtain signatures of academic advisor and all proposed committee members.
- Return to FSNSP Office of Student Affairs at address below. OSA will submit to the Academic Dean for Education.

Note: This form must be completed by the student and attached to the front page of the Letter of Intent (part I), Statement of Student's Independent Intellectual Contribution (part II), Statement of Preparedness for Thesis Research (part III), and Issues Relating to Publication of Dissertations (part IV).

Student: _____

Student ID: _____

Proposed Thesis Title: _____

Proposed Thesis Committee (pending approval by the Dean for Academic Affairs)

	Name (please print)	Signature <i>(This indicates that you have read the Letter of Intent (part I), Statement of Student's Independent Intellectual Contribution (part II), Statement of Preparedness for Thesis Research (part III), and Issues Relating to Publication of Dissertations (part IV).</i>	Email (if not like _____@tufts.edu)
1.	<i>(Proposed Advisor/Chair)</i>		
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Student Signature

Date _____

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___ Approved

___ Approved with Revisions (attached)

___ Not Approved

Academic Dean for Education Signature

Date _____

Part I: Letter of Intent

Prior to submission of a complete Thesis Proposal, the student must submit a Letter of Intent to the Dean for Academic Affairs. The Letter of Intent is developed with the help of the Thesis Advisor and must be submitted within three months following the successful completion of the qualifying exam. Along with the Letter of Intent, the student submits a letter stating the names of suggested individuals willing to serve on the Thesis Committee.

The contents of the Letter of Intent are as follows:

1. A description of the significance of the project (recommended length: one-half page).
2. The specific aims of the thesis research (recommended length: one page).
3. A brief description of the methods to be used. In this section the student must demonstrate that s/he has expertise in the methods or that s/he has direct access to individuals with the required expertise. A statement of the feasibility of the methods should also be included (recommended length: one page).
4. The logistics and schedule/time line of the proposed research (recommended length: one-half page).
5. Resources and support for the project. This pertains to the funds needed to complete the proposed project, covering supplies and equipment, staff, travel costs, printing expenses, postage, etc. (recommended length: one-half page). State the source(s) of funding.

The recommended page limits are only suggestions. However, the entire Letter of Intent may be no longer than five pages (excluding references). The Letter of Intent should be double spaced, 12-point type, and have 1” margins.

Part II: Statement of Student's Independent Intellectual Contribution

The student must provide a statement of his or her independent intellectual contributions to the thesis research. Intellectual contribution is defined as a substantial, direct, intellectual contribution to the conception and/or design of the research. This is different from technical services, which although essential to the work, are not in themselves sufficient contributions to justify intellectual contribution. Examples of intellectual contributions include, but are not limited to, significant input in the development of the study hypothesis, design of the study, development of study protocols, identification of study methodology, development or modification of methodology used in the project, or development of new applications, unique settings for use of existing methodology, or responsibility for independent analysis and interpretation of results. (1 page maximum)

The statement should be read and approved by all those whose names are being submitted as potential thesis committee members.

Part III: Statement of Preparedness for Thesis Research

The letter of intent should be accompanied by a statement of the preparedness of the student to carry out the proposed research. The student is not required, or even expected, to possess all of the necessary skills from the outset. This statement formally documents the additional skills that the student is expected to acquire during the course of the research.

The statement should be read and approved by all those whose names are being submitted as potential thesis committee members. The committee as a whole should discuss the statement with the candidate at the first committee meeting. At that time, the statement should be modified if necessary, approved unanimously by the committee, and made part of the formal thesis record. The candidate or any committee member may ask that the statement be reviewed and modified at any time during the course of the research. The statement should be revisited and, if necessary, revised whenever a substantial change in the research is proposed.

The statement should follow the following outline. If a particular skill set does not apply to the proposed research, so indicate.

Preparation For Thesis Research

Mastery of specific content areas: Describe the areas in which the research will take place, the candidate's preparation to date (coursework and experience), and any additional preparation needed before work can begin. Also, describe any background work that must be done while the research is ongoing.

Protection of Human Subjects: For research involving human subjects, state whether the candidate has received a certificate of completion for an approved program on protecting human subjects. Give the date on which it was awarded. State whether the research protocols have been approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board. Give the date approval was granted, or explain where in the review process the processed research stands. (For more information on research involving humans, visit <http://www.tufts.edu/central/research/HumanCare.htm>)

Laboratory techniques: Describe any laboratory techniques that will be used, the candidate's experience with these methods, and any additional work that must be done for the candidate to become proficient in these methods.

Nonlaboratory data collection methods: Describe any nonlaboratory data collection methods that will be used. These include, but are not limited to focus groups, qualitative data collection techniques, textual and content analysis, quantitative survey methods, dietary intake measurement, and anthropometric measurement. Describe the candidate's experience with these techniques and any additional training that must be obtained for the candidate to become proficient in these methods.

Data management procedures: Describe the procedures for recording and managing the data generated during this research (e.g., creation of files that will be used for statistical analysis, for recording survey results, etc.). Describe the candidate's experience with these methods. If additional training will be needed for the candidate to become proficient, describe how it will be obtained (coursework or independent study). If the research will rely entirely on data files produced as part of another study, so state.

Statistical analysis techniques: Describe in detail the statistical procedures by which the data are expected to be analyzed. Describe the candidate's experience with these methods. If additional training will be needed, describe how it will be obtained (such as coursework, independent study or work with the committee).

Part IV: Issues Relating to Publishing of Dissertations

A) Proprietary Data or Data Covered by A Confidentiality Agreement

Dissertations are intended to lead to the publication of results in the scholarly literature. Dissertations themselves are a form of publication, and are presented in a public forum as a requirement for completion of the degree. Therefore, students should not undertake dissertation research on projects that involve proprietary data or data covered by a confidentiality agreement if presentation or publication of their thesis research will be restricted or delayed by such agreements. The student and the thesis advisor are responsible for ensuring that presentation and publication of thesis research will not be subject to such delay or restriction.

Please answer the following.

The proposed research involves proprietary data or data covered by a confidentiality agreement. The student and the thesis advisor will take steps to ensure that presentation and publication of thesis research will not be subject to delay or restriction.

No Yes (Please explain briefly.)

B) Information, Products or Processes That May Be Proprietary or Patentable

When thesis research develops information, products or processes that may be proprietary or patentable, this fact must be brought to the attention of the Tufts University Office of Technology Transfer at the earliest possible date. Where the research will result in a patent application, the application must be filed by Tufts University before presentation or publication of the research results. It is the responsibility of the student and thesis advisor to ensure that preparation and filing of a patent application does not delay presentation or publication of the thesis research. Information and forms are available from the Tufts University Office for Technology Licensing and Industry Collaboration, <http://www.techtransfer.tufts.edu>. Phone: 617-636-0360.

Please answer the following.

The proposed research is expected to develop information, products or processes that are proprietary or patentable, and the student and advisor will take steps to bring this fact to the attention of the Tufts University Office for Technology Licensing and Industry Collaboration at the earliest possible date.

No Yes (Please explain briefly.)